

# Frequently Asked Questions

Information Regarding  
College and Career Ready  
Standards for  
Arizona

**1. Why were new standards developed?**

The standards were developed to provide clear, consistent messages of what students are expected to be able to learn and do. They help teachers and parents better understand what ALL students need to know and be able to do to be successful in our 21st Century global communities.

**2. How are new standards going to impact students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?**

These new standards promote higher expectations for all students with the intention of providing instruction leading to a wider range of opportunities or outcomes upon graduation.

**3. How will the changes be meaningful to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?**

These standards are meant to re-focus instruction on academic skills relevant to expanding opportunities for young people to be more successful post-graduation.

**4. Do special education students need to take statewide assessments?**

Yes.

**5. Will students with the most significant cognitive disabilities be assessed with new state standards?**

Yes.

**6. Who are the students participating in statewide alternate assessments?**

State Eligibility Criteria can be located at: <http://www.azed.gov/assessment/ncsc/> or <http://www.azed.gov/assessment/aims-a/> under the Eligibility tab.

**7. Do all students receive instruction in grade-level academic content?**

For students with significant cognitive disabilities, instruction will be linked to grade-level standards, but may be less complex and narrowed in scope. In addition to grade-level academic content, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may be receiving instruction in social, communication, and functional skills.

**8. What does grade-level instruction look like for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?**

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may receive repeated, focused instruction in smaller steps in order to use skills independently in many settings. Academic instruction should be individualized and based on student need as indicated in the student's IEP.

**9. When will the new assessments be available for administration?**

2014-2015 a new alternate assessment will be administered.

## College and



## What Do the Standards Mean for Children with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities?

June 2014

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Arizona Department of Education-Alternate Assessment Unit at 602-542-8239.



*The purpose of this brochure is to provide a better understanding of the College and Career Readiness Standards and what students are expected to learn. With this information parents will be able to help support their child to be college and career ready upon graduation from high school.*



## Overview of Standards

An important part of the changes in education today is standards leading to College and Career Readiness and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. These standards are built upon years of previous reform to improve educational opportunities for all children.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has resulted in students with disabilities receiving improved academic instruction, and showing increased academic achievement. These education acts include requirements for free appropriate public education and provide methods for monitoring a school's progress and accountability. These laws describe specialized education and related services to meet the unique needs of each individual

student so they are prepared for further education, employment and independent living.

The United States Department of Education is building on the foundation of these laws and preparing for making changes to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The U.S. Department of Education's recommendation is to include College and Career Readiness Standards for *all* students, and with reliable and high quality assessments of these standards.

The ESEA currently requires states to either change existing standards or work with other states to create common standards. These standards should clearly define the knowledge and skills students should have during their K-12 education so that they may graduate from high school ready for success in college courses and/or workforce training programs. Forty-eight states and territories have adopted a common set of standards called the Common Core State Standards. Teachers, administrators and curriculum content experts gathered from across states to create this set of College and Career Readiness Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics.

The state revised standards or the Common Core State Standards will continue to provide a shared focus for states and better aligned assessment systems to measure academic achievement and, ultimately, college and career readiness.

### For more information, visit:

**Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)**  
<http://www.cehd.umn.edu/NCEO/OnlinePubs/NCEO/AcronymHandbook.pdf>

**No Child Left Behind ACT of 2001 (NCLB)**  
<http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>

**Think College**  
<http://www.thinkcollege.net>

**U.S. Department of Education a Blueprint for Reform the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act**  
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf>

**U.S. Department of Education College and Career Ready Standards and Assessments**  
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/faq/college-career.pdf>

**U.S. Department of Education Learning Opportunities for your Child through Alternate Assessments**  
<http://www2.ed.gov/parents/needs/speced/learning/index.html>

**Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**  
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html>

**NOTE:** "The terms "college and career ready" and "college and career readiness" are used interchangeably throughout this document and in other publications."